



CIGAR BOX BULLETIN

Retired Men's Association of Greenwich, Inc.
37 Lafayette Place, Greenwich, CT 06830



www.greenwichrma.org

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SCRIBE: FRANK SCARPA

"Each day has its pitfalls and opportunities. The trick is to avoid the pitfalls, take advantage of the opportunities, and be home by six."

Woody Allen

President **RUSS HARDEN** opened the Zoom meeting and promptly segued into the playing of "We Are the RMA". **BOB BISHOP** then led us in the pledge.

Corresponding Secretary **ARNOLD GORDON** reminded us of the upcoming December 23 Holiday Event (which will begin at 10:45 am). Members, their friends, and relatives (including grandchildren) are encouraged to attend. Several "human interest" stories have been submitted, but there is room for more participation. Those interested should contact **ARNOLD** at ajgordo@verizon.net.

As a former Pfizer employee, **ARNOLD** expressed his pride in the approval of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in the UK.

WAYNE DeVRIES was welcomed back after recovering from May cardiac surgery and was given the mantle of Corresponding Secretary. In that role, he provided us with some jokes on such varied topics as the relationship of broccoli to truth, the survival of jealousy even in Heaven, and the health risks of ice.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PETER STERN provided the membership report: 67 members and one guest in attendance. Birthdays: **CARL VAN AKEN** turned 98 on Nov 30 and was present with his son Peter to accept our birthday wishes. **FRED BROOKS** turned 86. **ROGER CLARKE** reached 74.

WILL MORRISON checked in at 71. **BART STEINFELD** clicked in at 65. **HAROLD KUPLESKY** reached 82. **DWIGHT CHAPIN** celebrates his 80th.

Guest: Art Delmhorst attended as the guest of **MIKE SMITH** and **TOM HEALEY**.

In addition to **WAYNE DeVRIES**, **CHET RISIO** was welcomed back after a medical hiatus.

Treasurer: **JEFF JUNKER** had nothing new to report.

Visiting: **MIKE AMBROSINO** is doing well after testing positive for COVID.

PETER UHREY urged us to get out and enjoy the Greenwich parks. Binney Park in Old Greenwich has recently been upgraded. There is a nice stone walking path and an excellent playground and new tables by the restrooms. Across the street from the Perrot Library, the ten-acre Natural Park has a circular walk. Bruce Park near downtown has a circular asphalt path and a variety of trees, ponds with swans and winter birds. In Cos Cob, there are woodland trails in the Montgomery Pinetum. (Barbara Tuchman's family once owned land here.) The Botanical Center is worth a visit. Finally, the Pinetum/Pomerance Park Advisory Committee is seeking suggestions to improve these areas. Anyone interested in completing a short survey may contact **PETER UHREY** at uhry@sbcglobal.net. **TAD LARRABEE** has digital maps of these areas and is would be happy to share them.

Human Interest: **PAUL CAMPION** shared a few "groaners" attributed to **FRANK SCARPA** (medical twist). **TONY COCCHI** (educational angle), **JACK WEIR** (estate law) and **HOLLISTER STURGIS** (physical science).

BOB PHILLIPS gave us a preview of today's speaker, Josh Caballo, COO and Commissioner of Administrative Services for the State of Connecticut, who will speak to "Governor Lamont's Modernization and Streamlining Agenda".

Next Week's Speaker: **HOLLISTER STURGIS** previewed best-selling author David Michaelis, who will speak on Eleanor Roosevelt, based on his most recent book "Eleanor". This talk will be co-sponsored by the Greenwich Library.

ACTIVITIES

Tennis: **BILL FAKUNDINY** noted three sets of winners: **PETER DODGE** and **BRIAN MAHONEY**, **ANDRZEJ MAZUREK** and **BRIAN MAHONEY**, and **PETER DODGE** and **ANDRZEJ MAZUREK**.

Platform Tennis: **RUSS HARDEN** reported on five players at Laughlin Field. (Play is on Tuesdays at 9:30 am.)

Tai Chi: **WILL MORRISON** reported that the group had donated around \$1,600 to Neighbor to Neighbor in October. Sandy Hook Promise was the beneficiary of November's contributions.

Walkers: **TAD LARRABEE** previewed Thursday's walk at the site of the Battle of White Plains.

Hearts: **DON CONWAY** reported on four games. The big winners were **ANDY HOLMES** and **MICHAEL AMBROSINO**, each winning two games and shooting the moon once.

(**DON** also put in a shout out to the \$5 lunch served at the Senior Center bi-monthly.)

TODAY'S SPEAKER

Josh Caballo, COO and Commissioner of Administrative Services for the State of Connecticut spoke to "Governor Lamont's Modernization and Streamlining Agenda". Mr. Caballo did, however, begin his talk with the State's efforts against COVID-19. Connecticut is much better prepared from a PPE standpoint than it was last spring. And testing capability and experience have improved considerably. The State is making every effort to balance the need to keep the economy rolling with measures to fight the virus. Imminent vaccine distribution should bring us closer to the end of this crisis by mid-2021.

From a budgetary standpoint, the forecast is uncertain. Gov. Lamont has defended the idea of a "Rainy Day Fund" to help alleviate our 900-million-dollar deficit. Pension liability is up to 33% of GDP. Yet, over the past decade, the size of the State Government has been declining. The Governor is avid to avoid both tax increases and cuts to services. The current state workforce is aging, but there are pitfalls and opportunities to incentivizing retirement. By not refilling up to 1/3 of vacancies, costs may be able to be reduced by 20%. A lot of the business functions of the State Government (e.g. HR, IT, real estate, and procurements) may benefit from both centralization and automation. Currently, the State's ratio of square feet/ employee is higher than in the private sector. By using a cloud-based platform called "Salesforce", agencies may be able to be unified into a common platform. (This information may be accessed by going to business.ct.gov) A lively Q and A followed. Topics included the concept of "increasing the number of taxpayers rather than taxes" by attracting new businesses through the promotion of certainty and predictability.

NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER

David Michaelis, on the subject of his latest book, "*Eleanor Roosevelt*."

NOTE TO CBB CONTRIBUTORS: next week's CBB scribe will be **ARNOLD GORDON**. Please send a copy of any remarks you want included in the CBB to **ARNOLD** at ajgordo@verizon.net.

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Visit our website at <http://greenwichrma.org/>.

RMA 2020 CALENDAR

| Weekly Repetitive Activities | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| Date | Time | Activity | Contact |
| Mondays | 3:00 to 4:00 | Zoom: Better Balance through Tai Chi | Will Morrison @ wdmorrison@gmail.com |
| Tuesdays | 9:30 to 11:00 | Platform Tennis, Loughlin Ave. Cos Cob | James Dean @ jhdeanco@gmail.com |
| Wednesdays | 10:00to 11:00 | RMA Weekly Zoom Meeting | Horst Tebbe @ onehorst@optimum.net or Len Carusi @ lencarusi@gmail.com |
| Wednesdays | 1:00 to 3:00 | On-Line Bridge | Andre Mazurek @ mazurek.a.g@gmail.com |
| Wednesdays | 3:00 to 4:00 | Zoom: Better Balance through Tai Chi | Will Morrison @ wdmorrison@gmail.com |
| Thursdays | 9:00 AM | RMA Walking | Tad Larrabee @ tadarra@optonline.net |
| Fridays | 1:00 PM | On-Line Hearts | Don Conway @ spiderduck4@gmail.com |
| Fridays | 1:30pm to 3:00pm | Indoor Tennis | Andy Holmes @ andyholmes56@gmail.com |
| | Various Times TBD | On-Line Hearts | Don Conway @ spiderduck4@gmail.com |